

# Bethinking of Old Orleans

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## DOINGS OF THE OLD DAYS



Peddlers of plaster of paris statuary went from house to house selling their wares.

People slept on straw or cornhusk ticks upon rope laced bedsteads.

The bully in every neighborhood would put a chip on his shoulder and dare anyone to knock it off.

Young men dressing in high fashion wore skin-tight pantaloons with straps under their boots to keep them stretched out.

Every boy and girl knew how to play a jewsharp for entertainment.

A boy's last job at night during the winter was to grease his soots for the next day, probably only to suffer more chillblains.

Travelers used stage coaches drawn by four horses which made daily trips on the Ridge Road with frequent stops at the many inns.

Men wore paper shirt collars, a box of which could be purchased for 10 cents.

Two or three circuses appeared each season and were welcomed by people who walked out of town to meet the caravans.

Farmers marketed genuine pork sausage packed in muslin bags and honest-to-goodness head cheese and butchers sold smoked hog's jowls tied up in twos.

Croquet was the most popular sport, many people maintaining fine courts.

Old women as well as men would sit before the fireplace after the candles were lighted and smoke clay pipes.

Fire companies gave monthly exhibitions during the summer with some daring athletes performing stunts on high ladders.

Traveling humbugs and fakirs would set up and sell gew-gaws and worthless cure-alls by the light of smoking torches.

Gamblers and painted women making a nuisance of themselves were often run out of town.

Canary birds were popular and every woman longed for three dollars to buy a singer.

Farmers drank "switchel," a harvest drink made of water, vinegar, sugar, and a pinch of ginger.

Cows, hogs, geese and ducks roamed the village streets and mischievous boys would sometimes lure a cow aside to filch some milk.

Lamp-lighters with a ladder and a pocket full of matches were employed by the gas company to light the village street lamps.

Temperance campaigns were frequently conducted and hundreds of pledges were sought against intoxicants.

Japanese lanterns were strung up on the streets with more than sufficient fireworks and brass music for political campaigns.

The Clothier would always give the customer who purchased a new suit of clothes a tie or suspenders free to go with it.

The Masons held annual balls and the Knights Templars gave color to the grand march by appearing in full uniform.

The above accounts are taken from a news column of reminiscences which appeared in the "Orleans Republican" back in 1922.